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ABSTRACT

A practicum developed a whole language kindergarten at-home reading program. The target group was 27 sets of parents of children in a kindergarten classroom who volunteered to participate. The objectives were to increase the parents' knowledge of whole language techniques; increase their level of comfort in using whole language techniques at home with their children; and increase the parents' ability to judge critically the quality of children's literature books for instructional use. During a 12-week program, parents in the target group were instructed in whole language techniques and given a parent booklet on whole language written by the practicum researcher. Following an orientation session, the parents and their children read quality children's literature books at home together and then used whole language techniques to extend the reading activities. Critical thinking skills were required of the parents as they filled out weekly questionnaires on each of the books used in the program. The success of the project was documented through the evaluation data gathered, including the weekly returns of Parent Response Forms representing an 85% response rate. (A 27-item bibliography is attached. Appendixes include parent surveys, survey data, a parent whole language handbook, a book list, a whole language direction sheet, and a parent response form.) (SR)

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INVOLVING PARENTS IN WHOLE LANGUAGE KINDERGARTEN READING PROGRAM

by

Sandra N. Floyd

A Practicum Report
Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of
Education, Nova University, in partial fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science
July, 1992

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Abstract

Involving Parents in Whole Language Kindergarten Reading Program.

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Descriptors: Whole Language Approach/ Kindergarten Children/ Parent Education/ Parent School Relationship/ Parent Participation/ Emergent Literacy/ Beginning Reading/ Parent Student Relationship/ Reading Aloud to Others/ Children's Literature/ Critical Thinking/ Reading Instruction/ Parents as Teachers/ Home Programs/ Early Reading/

A Whole Language Kindergarten at-home reading program was developed and implemented by the writer of this practicum project. The target group was the parents of the children in the writer's classroom who volunteered to participate in this program. The objectives were to increase the parent's knowledge of Whole Language techniques; increase parent's level of comfort in using Whole Language techniques at home with their children; and increase the parent's ability to critically judge the quality of children's literature books for instructional use. During a twelve week program, the parents in the target group were instructed in Whole Language techniques and given a Parent Booklet on Whole Language written by the practicum author. Following an orientation session, the parents and their children read quality children's literature books at home together and then used Whole Language techniques to extend the reading activities. Critical thinking skills were required of the parents as they filled out weekly questionnaires on each of the books used in the program. The success of this project was documented through the evaluation data gathered. Related materials included: parent surveys, a parent Whole Language handbook, a book list, a Whole Language direction sheet, and a parent response form.

Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. When it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other professionals in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Signed: Sandra N. Lloyd

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

The School Setting

A newly-built community elementary school in a highly suburban area was the location for this practicum project. At that time, the school had an enrollment of 694 students in grades kindergarten through five with the overall student breakdown for the school of 598 white students, 50 Hispanic students, 40 Black students, and 13 Asian students and 2 Indian students. The students came from economically diverse households with incomes ranging from upper middle class to below poverty level with 72 students qualified for the free lunch program and 40 students qualified for the reduced lunch program. Before and after school care was available.

The total staff of this elementary school was 66 personnel. This included a professional staff of 26 classroom teachers, one principal, one assistant principal, one guidance counselor, one media specialist, one speech/language specialist, two SLD teachers, a full-time and a part-time music teacher, a full-time and a part-time art teacher, and a full-time and a part-time physical education teacher. One day a week the school was visited by a school psychologist as well as a school nurse.

Although this was the first year that this school had been in existence, it already had a highly active Parent/Teacher organization with a PTA membership of 457. It was predicted that this high parental involvement would be one of the strengths of this school with regards to parent-generated fund drives, classroom volunteer programs and a parent newsletter published monthly. Parent participation in school sponsored field trips, Open House programs, classroom and holiday events was also very high.

The Classroom Setting

The classroom setting was a heterogeneously grouped kindergarten class with thirty students. The student breakdown for this specific class was twenty five white students, two black students, two Asian students, and one Hispanic student with five children on the free lunch program. Four students were repeating kindergarten and one student was a special needs student and was three years older than the average kindergarten student (i.e. 8 years old entering kindergarten for the first time). Six students were placed in a part-time Speech/Language program, three students were placed in a part-time kindergarten Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) program, one student attended a weekly special needs guidance session, and one student was staffed for a Language Learning Disability (LLD) program.

The county's Unified Curriculum was followed in all grade levels at this elementary school. The Systematic Approach to Developmental Instruction

(SADI) was the district's kindergarten curriculum. The SADI program consisted of a compilation of 72 objectives based on skills that are considered essential for students to acquire if they are to be successful in the primary grades. Mastery of specific objectives was considered critical in areas such as central processing skills, environmental awareness, language development, and mathematical skills.

In the writer's classroom, the kindergarten curriculum was implemented by the use of the Whole Language Approach of integrated thematic units that emphasized the functional use of language. A comfortable, literate environment immersed the students in real language experiences of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Instruction occurred in a variety of settings: whole group instruction, small group instruction, individualized learning through centers activities and one-to-one teacher/student remediation for students who needed extra help.

The Writer's Role

The writer of this practicum project was a kindergarten teacher with 17 years of teaching experience (5 years of experience in kindergarten and 12 years of experience in grades 2-4). The writer's classroom responsibilities included classroom instructing, reinforcing and assessing of SADI skills, lesson planning, record keeping, attending regularly scheduled faculty meetings, attending staff development workshops, and maintaining appropriate

communication with parents. Student academic and developmental progress was appropriately supervised and recorded. A positive and nurturing classroom atmosphere was maintained through the use of Assertive Discipline techniques and weekly discipline updates to each parent.

The writer also strongly felt that very frequent teacher/parent communication was essential and desirable. A bi-weekly newsletter with a calendar of up-coming events kept the parents informed about current classroom projects and allowed them to take a more active role in their child's education. This newsletter explained teaching strategies being used at that time, told of the thematic units for the month, offered specific suggestions and activities that could be used at home for reinforcement and enrichment, and mentioned types of items that could be brought from home for sharing during a particular unit of study. The writer also supplemented these newsletters with individual notes and letters attached to assignments indicating where a student may need some additional help. Parents were also invited to visit the classroom both during the school day to share in special activities and before and after school for individual conferences. Telephone calls initiated by the teacher or the parent were also common occurrences. The frequency and ease of parent/teacher communication was often favorably commented on by the parents.

The writer of this project was a very enthusiastic supporter of the Whole Language Approach of curriculum instruction. "The 'Whole' in Whole

Language refers to the idea that all four language process components (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are learned as a whole rather than in segregated parts," (Elsele, 1991:19). During the past four years, Whole Language knowledge had been gained by the writer through numerous in-service workshops, extensive personal research and study at the County Curriculum library, graduate level courses in Elementary Reading and Language, and membership in a Whole Language teacher support group. Perhaps the most valuable training in Whole Language had been gained through actual on-going classroom implementation of kindergarten Whole Language techniques over a four year period. The writer had also presented an in-service workshop with an eight page informational handout to teachers, administrators, and district specialists on "Emergent Curriculum - Using Whole Language in the Kindergarten Classroom".

The Target Group

The target group for this practicum project was the twenty-seven (out of a possible thirty) sets of parents who volunteered to participate in the writer's project. This specific group of parents had shown a high degree of interest and involvement in school activities . At the before-school Open House, one hundred percent of the students had at least one parent attend, with many whole families attending (father, mother, sisters, brothers, and some grandparents). During Curriculum Night, 32 people attended to hear the

explanation of the year's curriculum and the Whole Language Approach being instituted in the writer's classroom. For the first field trip, twelve parents volunteered to drive. Parent participation and interest was also evident in prompt responses to parent/teacher correspondence, classroom donations for current projects, and parental help on student homework assignments. For the first three out of five homework assignments, one hundred percent of the students returned their homework the next day, and 29 out of 30 students returned their assignments on the following two homework assignments.

Frequent teacher/parent communication was facilitated by bi-weekly newsletters and individual letters attached to classroom assignments to note areas where students may need help. Next day responses to parent/teacher letters were common with parents taking an active interest in the education and well-being of their children in this classroom setting.

Problem Statement

Today, educators recognize that active, involved parents can be valuable partners in the education of their children. Evidence and research "substantiating the impact of parents on education is mounting. For schools this means that integrating parents into the designs of the educational system can maximize student growth. Additionally, the added support on the home front promotes positive student attitudes toward learning throughout the entire elementary curriculum," (Fredericks and Rasinski, 1990:692). The

professional educator (the teacher) must enlist parents as key players in their child's academic success. A shift in thinking about the nature of effective home/school communication and shared responsibility is needed to promote effective learning at home as well as at school.

In the past 20 years, researchers have developed a philosophy of learning known as Whole Language. This philosophy is

> . . . based on the belief that children enter school as already experienced learners and that their need and desire to learn will grow and prosper within a safe and supportive environment, where they are surrounded by quality materials, where they see others engaged in the same tasks, and where they have time for self-initiated practice. Because this picture grows out of the home, not in competition with it, the children's learning and well-being become the shared responsibility of both parents and teachers. (Baskwill, 1989: 3)

However, parents are not always informed about changes in curriculum and may resist innovative new learning methods such as the Whole Language Approach unless teachers are successful in explaining and involving parents in curriculum change. Often parents feel threatened and confused by changes in curriculum and need reassurance that these changes are right for their children. "Parents can be a very powerful support group. They can also be powerful adversaries if they feel they must protect their children from what they consider an experiment, a whim or unsound pedagogy," (Baskwill, 1989:70). Educators interested in curriculum change must build parents' confidence and trust in a new curriculum, they must actively work at rekindling parental support and involvement.

Parent partners in education is not a new idea and most parents are aware that reading at home with their children is both beneficial and desirable. The Kindergarten Parent Survey of Whole Language (Appendix A:45) designed by the writer of this practicum was filled out by each parent in the target group as a pre-implementation instrument to gather information for a needs assessment. The survey was written so that parents could circle responses on a four point scale without too much effort. After the question section of the survey, parents were asked to volunteer to participate in the at-home parent/child Whole Language reading program proposed in this practicum. The parents who volunteered then became the target group for this project. On this survey, 96 percent of the target group signified their belief that reading at home with their children was very important. This survey also showed that 84 percent of their children liked/loved to be read to at home and 16 percent of their children were moderately interested in being read to at home. However, only 20 percent of these same parents indicated on the survey that they had a moderate amount of knowledge about Whole Language philosophy and techniques that were being implemented in the writer's kindergarten class, while 80 percent of these parents stated that they had very little or no knowledge of Whole Language techniques. Although, ideally, 100 percent of parents should be aware of the curriculum in their child's classroom, for purposes of this practicum, a more realistic goal of 80 percent of the target group parents was set. A discrepancy of 60 percent existed for

this goal. Therefore, there existed a need for a 60 percent improvement of the target group's knowledge of Whole Language techniques.

The Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix A:45) also inquired if the parents would feel comfortable using Whole Language techniques in their home after a Whole Language orientation session. At least 36 percent of the surveyed parents said that they would feel not at all comfortable or only slightly comfortable using Whole Language techniques at their home while 64 percent of the parents stated they would feel comfortable using Whole Language techniques at home. Theoretically, for effective at home instruction to occur, a 100 percent of the target group should be comfortable using Whole Language techniques at home with their children, but a more realistic goal of 80 percent was set for the purposes of this practicum. A discrepancy of 16 percent existed for this goal, therefore there was a need for a 16 percent improvement of the target group's ability to feel comfortable using Whole Language techniques.

One of the cornerstones of the Whole Language philosophy is an emphasis on the use of good, quality literature books to support literacy development in children.

> Good literature (that which readers can go back to again and again and never "use up") is at the heart of the curriculum. Through reading quality stories and other real texts, students practice their reading, feel the support provided by the author's language, and become more successful and joyful readers. (Watson, 1989:135)

On the Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix A:45), the target group parents were asked about their ability to critically judge the quality and suitability for instruction of children's literature books. On this question, 67 percent of the parents felt that they were moderately qualified or well qualified to critically judge the quality of a children's literature book. However, 33 percent of the target group parents indicated that they felt not at all qualified or only slightly qualified to judge the quality of children's literature books. Ideally, 100 percent of parents should be able to judge the quality of their child's books, but for this practicum, a more realistic goal of 90 percent was acceptable. A discrepancy of 22 percent existed for this goal. Thus, there was a need for a 22 percent improvement of the target group's ability to critically judge the quality and suitability for instruction of children's literature books.

Therefore, the problems were:

1. There was a discrepancy of 60 percent in the target group's knowledge of Whole Language techniques.

2. There was a discrepancy of 16 percent in the target group's ability to feel comfortable using Whole Language techniques.

3. There was a discrepancy of 22 percent in the target group's ability to critically judge the quality and suitability for instruction of children's literature books.

Outcome Statement

The following objectives were chosen by the writer of this practicum:

1. After a Whole Language parent orientation session and ten weeks of at-home experience with Whole Language techniques, 80 percent of the target group parents will be able to identify Whole Language techniques as measured by the Kindergarten Parent Survey of Whole Language (Appendix B:47) designed by the writer of this practicum.
2. After a Whole Language parent orientation session and ten weeks of at-home experience with Whole Language techniques, 80 percent of the target group parents will feel a positive level of enjoyment or comfort using Whole Language techniques at home with their children as measured by the Kindergarten Parent Survey of Whole Language (Appendix B:47) designed by the writer of this practicum.
3. After a Whole Language parent orientation session and ten weeks of at-home experience with Whole Language techniques, 90 percent of the target group parents will also be able to critically judge the quality of children's literature books and the book's suitability for instructional use in the Whole Language setting as measured by the Kindergarten Parent Survey of Whole Language (Appendix B:47) designed by the writer of this practicum. A Parent Response Form (Appendix C:49) will be used in this project to help the parents gain practice in evaluating quality children's books.

Although not corresponding with a specific objective, an Attitudinal Survey on Whole Language Reading Program (Appendix D:51) will be used to provide informational feedback so adjustments or changes can be made in the program for future use by the writer. The survey will ask about the enjoyment of the program for both the parent and the child; the suitability of selection of the books for this program; the amount of time required on a weekly basis for implementing this program; and program favorites by the parent and the child. Additional space will be provided for comments.

The aforementioned objectives were deemed by the writer of this practicum to be realistic and reasonable for several reasons. The time period allotted for the practicum was sufficient to provide measurable results indicating that these three Whole Language objectives were met. The writer also had positive administrative support at the school level. The resources needed to complete this practicum would all be supplied by the writer and were easily attainable. The writer also believes that this practicum project was worthwhile because as Allen and Freitag (1988:922) state "educators recognize parents as valuable partners in educating children . . . and that teachers who succeed in involving parents in their children's schoolwork are successful because they (the teachers) work at it."

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

"In a society that values literacy, ...more parents are voicing a preference for placing their children in programs with a vigorous beginning reading emphasis," (Stewart, 1985:356). Questions are being raised about when, where and how beginning reading instruction should begin. In recent years, educational researchers have given some implications about the early reading process. It is now known that children's interest in reading begins at a very early age and that they learn in ways that are different than adult or conventional methods. Findings also indicate that early educational programs need to systematically increase children's exposure to both oral language and written language. (Stewart, 1985)

> When should reading instruction begin? At birth, with lots of oral language and a home filled with books, magazines, newspapers, and adults to answer children's questions about written language. At school, reading instruction begins in a print-rich classroom that will systematically provide many opportunities for reading behaviors. (Stewart, 1985:360)

The Whole Language approach to reading instruction is more of a philosophy rather than a methodology, and it incorporates many of the researchers findings into a set of beliefs about how language learning

happens. This grass roots movement among teachers in the 1990s supports integrated language instruction as part of the curriculum rather than teaching isolated skills. Principles that guide Whole Language instruction include:

- The function of language - oral and written - is to construct meaning.
- Language is both personal and social. It serves thinking and communicating.
- Speaking, listening, reading, and writing are all learned best in authentic speech and literacy events.
- The learner builds on prior knowledge and operates on ever-developing "hypotheses" about how oral and written language operate.
- Cognitive development depends on language development and vice versa.
- Learning how to use language is accomplished as learners use language to learn about the world. The focus is on the subject matter. (Wagner, 1989:2)

Whole Language curriculum includes using real life experiences that are shared together by the class and turning them into language activities. Often instruction is centered around a thematic unit which integrates the curriculum around a specific topic. Skills instruction is then organized naturally through language activities that relate to real life experiences. A language activity derived from the real life experience is not simply limited to an oral or written accounting of the event, however. Examples of oral language activities might include: retelling; summarizing the experience; verbalizing thoughts and feelings about the experience; predicting outcomes; asking questions; listing knowledge learned; discussing or explaining a concept from an experience; and comparing and contrasting information. Written

language activities derived from real life experiences might include: making a personal book about the experience; contributing to a class book relating to the experience; dramatizing the experience by turning it into a script; poetry writing; and journal writing. Other related activities might be: using expressive activities such as art, music, and movement to relate experiences or to share insight gained.

The use of critical thinking skills in the Whole Language Approach is also very evident. As new research into critical thinking and current theories of literacy develop, teachers must reevaluate their beginning reading instructional practices to include higher order thinking skills (Shapiro and Kilbey, 1990). Traditional reading instruction routinely included lower order thinking skills such as: read, recall, name, match, identify, list illustrate, record, etc. Since Whole Language curriculum revolves around the learner's interests - authentic, quality learning takes place when the student explores possibilities, initiates creative solutions and independently forges new questions and ideas (Watson, 1990). In the Whole Language classroom, higher order thinking skills take place when the students: discuss, choose, predict, design, evaluate, rate, decide, dispute, judge, select, imagine, compose, create, etc.

In the Whole Language Approach, emphasis is put on reading aloud to children to expose them to the written word and also to the rhythms of reading. Through oral reading, many skills and attitudes can be reinforced.

Reading aloud to children has been shown to: stimulate interest and emotional development, imagination, and language development; prepare children for understanding of the written language; develop listening skill; expand the learner's experiences; and provide a pleasurable time for the child (Rustin, 1989).

The use of quality children's literature is also very important in the Whole Language curriculum. Research tells us that early childhood is the most critical time for children to acquire language. "The more complex language found in quality books may affect children's language and vocabulary growth," (Rustin, 1989). When a child is looking at a book, or talking about the pictures, there is active participation in language which is much more beneficial than just passive listening. Good literature also offers advantages such as giving the child the opportunity to view different characters, situations, and moral values. The listener/reader has the opportunity to "feel what others feel and participate in situations rather than just observing them," (Rustin, 1989:25).

The use of parents in this practicum project was especially important. Parental involvement in a Whole Language program is particularly essential because "Whole Language holds the promise of establishing and strengthening a very important bond between home and schoo . . . and may further the goals and objectives of the entire reading curriculum," (Fredericks and Rasinski 1990:692). "Research suggests that children who had adult role models who read for pleasure learned to read easily and remained good readers

throughout their school years," (Rustin, 1989:22). Parents also can emphasize the importance placed on reading in their daily lives and can establish a role model for their children to emulate. Research also indicates that at-home literacy activities such as reading aloud, purposeful writing, and parent/child interactions about stories, words, and experiences are highly congruent with the practices found in a Whole Language kindergarten and a natural extension of what was learned in the classroom. These literacy activities seemed to form the foundation for growth in literacy learning in both home and school settings (Rasinski, 1990).

In other locations and school settings, the focus of previous research and study of parental involvement in Whole Language curriculum has centered around informing the parents about the new curriculum and its use in the school. In 1989, a parental brochure written by Graves and Senecal called "Let's Celebrate Whole Language (A Practical Guide for Parents)" stated that its purpose was to tell parents: "1. what Whole Language is; 2. how it is being used in the classroom; 3. how you can apply Whole Language at home to benefit your child," (Graves and Senecal 1989: 3). Other educators such as Allen and Freitag (1988) have developed workshops to inform parents of ways that they can "assist and encourage their child to succeed academically . . . and gave parents specific tools and the confidence to support the school's efforts," (Allen and Freitag, 1988:923). Fields (1988) developed a chart comparing the commonalities of oral and written language development. Fields

further stated that "When parents understand how written language development is similar to that of oral language, they are more willing to accept Whole Language instruction," (Fields 1988:898).

The writer of this practicum sought not only to inform and educate the parents about Whole Language curriculum, but also to provide an opportunity for these parents to read quality children's literature books aloud to their children at home. Then the parents were asked to apply some Whole Language techniques with their child to reinforce the book and its concepts. The practicum writer was unable to find comparable research done on this topic.

The solution strategy of this practicum centered around a 10 week parent/child at-home reading program utilizing Whole Language techniques. To facilitate parent knowledge of Whole Language curriculum and techniques, a parent Whole Language training program and orientation session was held. At this session, the Whole Language curriculum and techniques were discussed and demonstrated. During the orientation session, each family also received a Whole Language parent handbook (Appendix E:54) explaining and outlining the Whole Language methods and philosophies that were used in the writer's classroom.

After the parent orientation session, book bags were sent home each week to the parents who volunteered to participate in this practicum project. Included in each book bag was:

- one high quality children's book (Appendix F:64)
- one Whole Language direction sheet (Appendix G:67) with questions and information for that specific book
- one portfolio folder with two pockets and fasteners
- several pre-punched sheets of white paper
- one parent response form (Appendix C:49).

The parent/child team was asked to read one children's literature book and then follow the Whole Language directions that were specifically written for use with that particular book. The child's response to Question 4 (the writing/drawing assignment) was then placed in the portfolio folder. The accumulation of responses then became an additional reading activity for all the parent/child teams who received the folder in the following weeks to read and enjoy. Parents in the target group were asked to fill out the short Parent Response Form (Appendix C:49) that used critical thinking skills to evaluate the children's literature book read that week. This response form was used for the parents to practice evaluating children's books and to practice using the critical thinking skills of rating, evaluating, using a scale and forming an opinion.

At the end of the 10 week reading program, the target group was asked to fill out the Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix B:47) which was used to gather data to indicate the success/failure of this practicum. The target group was also asked to fill out the Attitudinal Survey on Whole Language Reading Program (Appendix D:51). This survey was used to help

evaluate the at-home reading program as it was written and provide feedback so adjustments or changes could be made in the program for future use by the writer.

CHAPTER III

Method

The following is a sequential time-line outlining the activities that were carried out during the 12 week practicum. Task identification, data collection procedures, personnel requirements, instructional materials, monitoring procedures, mid-course corrections, and evaluation procedures are described within this time frame.

Week One

Parent Whole Language Orientation and At-Home Reading Program Training Session

Parents were invited to a night-time meeting to acquaint themselves with Whole Language curriculum and techniques. A Whole Language Parent Handbook (Appendix E:54) was given to each family group explaining the methods and philosophies that were used in the writer's classroom during the instructional day. Examples of current classroom Whole Language lessons and projects were displayed.

Included in the classroom displays were:

- Big Books produced by commercial companies
- Big Books made by the students in the classroom

- wall charts with poetry, nursery rhymes, current unit work
- student work decorating the walls and bulletin boards
- an overflowing room library with a wide variety of classroom books and reading material
- pocket charts with word and picture cards
- an art center set up for independent art and writing activities
- examples of journal writing activities
- a comfortable, quiet corner to invite the children to read during free time
- a listening center equipped with headsets, a tape recorder, and a variety of listening activities.

After the presentation, a question and answer period was initiated for the parents to ask any questions about the Whole Language curriculum that was used in the classroom and how it would be applied to the at-home Whole Language reading program. Each set of parents was then given the opportunity to sign up for the at home parent/child reading program. Participants for this program were also solicited during the pre-implementation Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix A:45) that was used to gather information for the problem statement section. The sets of parents that volunteered to participate in this project (27 out of an available 30) then became the target group parents for this practicum.

Book selection criteria was discussed in regards to the quality of the book involved, vocabulary level, interest level, and instructional value. A list of Newberry Award winning books and Caldecott Award winning books was made available. Parents were told of the three main categories of the books for this practicum: Easy Readers - books that beginning readers could read parts or all of with a minimum amount of parental help; Non-Fiction Books - books that tell about baby animals, seasons, life on the farm, etc.; Read-Aloud Favorites - the biggest category in the at-home reading program. Most of the titles in the Read-Aloud Favorites category were books listed in Jim Trelease's book called The New Read-Aloud Handbook (Penguin Books, 1989) which was made available for parental use. The parents were also informed about the use of the Parent Response Form (Appendix C:49) that was used in this project to aid them in evaluating quality children's books. It was discussed that this response form could also be used for the parents to judge the books that are already in their homes and as a basis for book selection purposes in the future.

Week Two

1. Thirty quality children's literature books, suitable for use with Kindergarten children, were selected. See listing of these books in Appendix F:64. The books used for this practicum project were in the writer's own collection of children's books which have been accumulated over many years of teaching.

2. A Whole Language Direction Sheet (Appendix G:67) for each book in the practicum project was filled out and stapled to the front of each portfolio folder. Each direction sheet was specifically designed for use with that particular book and the questions were geared for parent use with kindergarten children. The Whole Language Direction Sheet for each book included the following information or directions:

- Title and Author of Book

- A Reading Assignment (Read the book at least twice; once for enjoyment and once for answers to other questions or ideas for drawings)

- An Oral Language Discussion Assignment (Answer one or two questions to talk about or find answers to)

- A "Mystery" Book Search Assignment (Skim the book to find two specific pictures. Can you find. . . ?)

- A Writing or Drawing Assignment (Draw a picture about suggested topic and then parent and/or student write a short phrase, sentence, or story about this picture. Place picture into the portfolio folder provided in the book bag.)

- A Second Reading Assignment (Read the writing/drawing responses in the portfolio folder that had been placed there by previous students.)

- A Request for parents to fill out the Parent Survey Form (Appendix C:49) about this children's literature book.

3. A book bag packet was organized for each of the thirty books in the program. This book bag included:

- one high quality children's book (Appendix F:64)
- one Whole Language direction sheet (Appendix G:67) with questions and information for that specific book
- one portfolio folder with two pockets and fasteners
- several pre-punched sheets of white paper
- one Parent Response Form (Appendix C:49)
- a plastic zip-lock bag large enough to include all the above items

4. An organizational system for keeping track of which parent/child received each book in the program was set up. This system tracked who currently had the book bag and which ones had been sent home previously. A wall chart with the student's names and the names of all the books was posted at a child's eye-level. A backup recording system was also set up in a notebook.

5. The critical thinking component of this practicum was implemented by the use of the Parent Response Form (Appendix C:49). This form, which was included in each book bag, provided book evaluation practice for the parents and asked the parents to complete the following questions:

1. Rate the quality of this book for instructional purposes.
2. Evaluate the vocabulary of this book for a kindergarten student.

3. On a scale of 1 - 10, this book had an interest level for my child of _____.

4. In my opinion, I feel that this was a good/bad book (circle one) for instructional purposes because _____. (Short answer requested).

Weeks Three through Twelve

1. Each week, one book bag each week was sent home with the student. This book bag was returned within the one week period as soon as the parent/child finished reading the book and following the Whole Language directions in the book bag. Provisions were made for those parents who wished to do more than one book bag per week with their child. Example: Monday - first book bag of week sent home; Wednesday - first book bag returned and second book bag sent home; Friday - second book bag returned. Occasionally, a student read more than two books in one specific week. As the child selected a book bag to take home, a blue dot was placed in the correct box on the wall chart used to keep track of who had which book. Then, as the child brought back a completed book bag, he chose a star to put in the appropriate box. The children were encouraged to count and keep track of how many books that they had read.

2. Each morning, about fifteen to twenty minutes were set aside during circle time (a group sharing period in kindergarten classrooms) for our book bag program. During this time, the children were given a choice on how they wanted to share their experiences with the book - some children showed their pictures in the portfolios, some children read a few pages in the book, and some children told about their favorite part of the story. This daily sharing time generated interest and excitement for the at-home reading books and was looked forward to by the students with enthusiasm. During this time, the teacher/writer also read some of the books in the program to the class when time permitted.

3. Mid-course corrections were handled during this time period in a variety of ways. Concerns and questions that a number of parents had were answered in the bi-weekly newsletter. These newsletters also gave update reports on the number of books read to-date and told interesting anecdotes about the program. Specific parent questions were answered either with a personal telephone call or with a personal note. Several Whole Language Direction Sheets (Appendix G:67) were reworded slightly to clarify the directions. One book, The Story of Babar by Jean De Brunhoff, was removed from the program because two parents complained about the elephant death portrayed in the book.

4. During week twelve, a Kindergarten Parent Survey of Whole Language (Appendix B:47) and an Attitudinal Survey on Whole Language Reading Program (Appendix D:51) were sent home to each target group parent. Also, during week twelve, reading awards were presented to all the students who participated in this program and a special award was given to the student who read the most books (28 books) during the program.

5. Results were tabulated from both surveys for use in evaluating the success/failure of this practicum project. The written responses from the Parent Response Form (Appendix C:49) were gathered after each reading of the book and were not allowed to accumulate in the portfolio folders for the next parent to read. During week twelve, these response forms were sorted and returned to the appropriate folders after the book bags were returned for the final time.

CHAPTER IV

Results

During this project 307 books were read by 27 parent/child groups (an average of 11.4 books per group). A total of 260 Parent Response Forms (Appendix C:49) were gathered (an 85 percent return rate). The following results (see also Appendix H:69) were obtained from this practicum project:

Objective 1

After a Whole Language parent orientation session and ten weeks of at-home experience with Whole Language techniques, 80 percent of the target group will be able to identify Whole Language techniques.

Evaluation tool for Objective 1

The Kindergarten Parent Survey of Whole Language (Appendix B:47) was used to evaluate this objective. Question #3 on this survey asked the target group about their familiarity with Whole Language techniques in reading instruction. An optional section gave the target group a chance to list their favorite Whole Language technique used during the practicum project. This survey was sent to the target group during week twelve.

Results Obtained for Objective 1

Question #3. I am familiar with Whole Language Techniques (WLT) in reading instruction.

	Pretest	Post Test
1 - No knowledge of WLT	66	4
2 - Very little knowledge of WLT	14	11
3 - Moderate amount of kn of WLT	20	41
4 - A great deal of knowledge of WLT	0	44

The initial survey given to the target group, Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix A:45), indicated that only 20 percent of the parents had a moderate or great deal of knowledge about Whole Language Techniques. The post-test Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix B:47) indicated that 85 percent of the parents had a moderate or great deal of knowledge about Whole Language Techniques. Therefore, Objective 1 was deemed successful.

Excerpts from the parent responses about which Whole Language Technique was their favorite

* "Our favorite part of the Whole Language reading program was seeing the pictures that were drawn after each book was read and discussed; although we did enjoy each step of the process."

* "My favorite technique was the questions that were asked to check the comprehension of the story. I also liked the part that enabled the child to construct his or her own sentence."

* "Asking my child to go back and find certain pictures. I really knew he was paying attention to the book."

* "Backtracking through the book to see if my child absorbed the story and if she remembered the order in which the events happened."

* Reading aloud and/or reading together - 7 separate responses

Objective 2

After a Whole Language parent orientation session and ten weeks of at-home experience with Whole Language techniques, 80 percent of the target group will feel a positive level of enjoyment or comfort using Whole Language techniques at home with their children.

Evaluation tool for Objective 2

The Kindergarten Parent Survey Whole Language (Appendix B:47) designed by the writer of this practicum was used to evaluate this objective. Question #4 on this survey asked the target group about their level of comfort in using Whole Language techniques at home with their children. This survey was sent to the target group during week twelve.

Results obtained for Objective 2

Question #4. I feel (or would feel after Whole Language orientation session) comfortable using Whole Language techniques at home during parent/child reading time.

	Pretest	Post Test
1 - Not at all comfortable	4	0
2 - Slightly comfortable	33	0
3 - Moderately comfortable	59	19
4 - Very comfortable	4	81

The initial survey given to the target group, Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix A:45), indicated that only 63 percent of the parents felt a positive level of enjoyment or comfort using Whole Language techniques at home with their child. The post-test Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix B:49) indicated that 100 percent of the parents felt a positive level of enjoyment or comfort using Whole Language techniques at home with their child. Therefore, Objective 2 was deemed successful.

Objective 3

After a Whole Language parent orientation session and ten weeks of at-home experience with Whole Language techniques, 90 percent of the target

group parent will feel able to critically judge the quality of children's literature books and the book's suitability for instructional use in the Whole Language setting.

Evaluation tool for Objective 3

The Kindergarten Parent Survey of Whole Language (Appendix B:47) designed by the writer of this practicum was used to evaluate this objective. Question #5 on this survey asked the target group about their ability to critically judge the quality and suitability for instruction of a children's literature book. This survey was sent to the target group during week twelve.

Results obtained for Objective 3

Question #5. I feel able to critically judge the quality and suitability for instruction of a children's literature book.

	Pretest	Post Test
1 - Not at all qualified	15	0
2 - Slightly qualified	18	7
3 - Moderately qualified	37	63
4 - Well qualified	30	30

The initial survey given to the target group, Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix A:45), indicated that only 67 percent of

the parents felt able to critically judge the quality of children's literature books and the book's suitability for instructional use in the Whole Language setting. The post-test Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language (Appendix B:47) indicated that 93 percent of the parents felt able to critically judge the quality of children's literature books and the book's suitability for instructional use in the Whole Language setting . Therefore, Objective 3 was deemed successful.

The critical thinking component of this practicum was also implemented by the use of the Parent Response Form (Appendix C:49) for practicing the evaluation of children's literature books. The parents were required to use higher order thinking skills to complete this form. They were asked to: rate the quality of a book for instructional purposes; evaluate the book's vocabulary; scale from 1 to 10 the book's interest level for their child; and form an opinion about the book for instructional purposes. Optional write-in opinions were also solicited. A total of 260 parent responses were returned which constituted an 85 percent return rate. The effectiveness of the Parent Response Form was reflected in the success of Objective 3.

The results of the Attitudinal Survey on Whole Language Reading Program (Appendix I:72) were positive and valuable information was gathered for continued use of this reading program. Parent survey results indicated that: 100 percent of the parent/child groups enjoyed the program; 63 percent felt that the book selection was suitable; and 89 percent felt that the time factor was appropriate.

Excerpts from parent responses on Attitudinal Survey

* "We always read to our children and this gave us more insight on how to get more out of reading together."

* "Before you started the program, we would just read on our own at home. Now when we read our books at home, we do the questions for almost all our books and our daughter has started to draw pictures about each book."

* "There is such a variety of books out there, it is difficult to select all the right books. I liked seeing the types of books we could be reading right now."

* "It was nice to have a variety of regular reading to do. It was also rewarding to see my child grow greatly on her reading skills."

* "We (parent and child) both enjoyed the program. I was just as excited as my son was when we checked his backpack to find out what book was next!"

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

Plans to make the program on-going

1. Present program results to administrative members in school setting: principal and vice principal.

2. Make parent/child at-home Whole Language reading program a part of classroom curriculum in the writer's classroom in upcoming years. Use the results obtained from the Attitudinal Survey on Whole Language Reading Program (Appendix I:72) to make adjustments in the program. Make book selections changes to incorporate some of the parental suggestion such as - more Easy Reader books, duplicate copies of some of the class favorites so that everyone gets a turn during the program, replace the four least popular books with other selections, and send home a copy of the book list.

3. Present program results to other kindergarten teachers within the school setting in the form of an informal informational workshop. Share the materials used in practicum: the Whole Language Parent Handbook (Appendix E:54); the list of 30 children's literature books used during practicum project (Appendix

F:64); and the Whole Language Direction Sheet that goes in the book bags (Appendix G:67). Explain how the program was set up, what worked and did not work, and the benefits seen from the program, and other pertinent information.

4. Present program results and informational handouts to the Area Language Specialist for inclusion in upcoming Whole Language Parent Participation workshops.

5. Present workshop on topic at Whole Language support group in the county if asked.

6. A Whole Language informational session was presented to undergraduate college students majoring in Elementary Education. The instructor in this course was the writer's practicum advisor and the writer was asked to include information on Whole Language in the Kindergarten setting and also information on the Whole Language At-Home Reading program being used as this practicum project.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language
Pre-Implementation Survey

Appendix A

KINDERGARTEN PARENT SURVEY ON WHOLE LANGUAGE
Pre-implementation Survey

Please circle one of the numbers to indicate your level of knowledge/comfort/interest.

1. I believe that reading at home with my child is important.
   1 - Not at all important
   2 - Slightly important
   3 - Moderately important
   4 - Very important

2. My child likes/loves to be read to at home.
   1 - Not at all, not interested
   2 - Slightly interested
   3 - Moderately interested
   4 - Very interested

3. I am familiar with Whole Language techniques in reading instruction.
   1 - No knowledge of Whole Language techniques
   2 - Very little knowledge of Whole Language techniques
   3 - Moderate amount of knowledge of Whole Language techniques
   4 - A great deal of knowledge of Whole Language techniques

4. I feel (or would feel after Whole Language orientation session) comfortable using Whole Language techniques at home during parent/child reading time.
   1 - Not at all comfortable
   2 - Slightly comfortable
   3 - Moderately comfortable
   4 - Very comfortable

5. I feel able to critically judge the quality and suitability for instruction of a children's literature book.
   1 - Not at all qualified
   2 - Slightly qualified
   3 - Moderately qualified
   4 - Well qualified

I would be interested in participating in an at home parent/child reading program. (Students bring home a BOOK BAG from school with suggested Whole Language activities; 20-30 minutes weekly)

_____ Yes, I would like to participate in a home reading program with my child.

_____ I would like to know more about this program before I sign up.

_____ No, I am not interested in participating.

Appendix B

Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language
Post Test Survey

Appendix B

KINDERGARTEN PARENT SURVEY ON WHOLE LANGUAGE
Post Test Survey

Please circle one of the numbers to indicate your level of knowledge/comfort/interest.

1. I believe that reading at home with my child is important.
   1 - Not at all important
   2 - Slightly important
   3 - Moderately important
   4 - Very important

2. My child likes/loves to be read to at home.
   1 - Not at all, not interested
   2 - Slightly interested
   3 - Moderately interested
   4 - Very interested

3. I am familiar with Whole Language techniques in reading instruction.
   1 - No knowledge of Whole Language techniques
   2 - Very little knowledge of Whole Language techniques
   3 - Moderate amount of knowledge of Whole Language techniques
   4 - A great deal of knowledge of Whole Language techniques

4. I feel (or would feel after Whole Language orientation session) comfortable using Whole Language techniques at home during parent/child reading time.
   1 - Not at all comfortable
   2 - Slightly comfortable
   3 - Moderately comfortable
   4 - Very comfortable

5. I feel able to critically judge the quality and suitability for instruction of a children's literature book.
   1 - Not at all qualified
   2 - Slightly qualified
   3 - Moderately qualified
   4 - Well qualified

****

Optional Question:
List your favorite Whole Language technique that was used during this project.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix C

Parent Response Form

Appendix C

PARENT RESPONSE FORM

NAME OF BOOK:_____

1. Rate the quality of this book for instructional purposes:

   Excellent Good Fair

2. Evaluate the vocabulary level of this book for a Kindergarten student:

   High Medium Low

3. On a scale of 1 - 10, this book had an interest level for my child of:

   _____

4. Please give a short answer to the following question.

   In my opinion, I feel that this was a good/poor book (circle one) for instructional purposes because:

   _____

   _____

   _____

Appendix D

Attitudinal Survey on Whole Language Reading Program

Appendix D
ATTITUDINAL SURVEY ON WHOLE LANGUAGE READING PROGRAM

Thank You for participating in the Whole Language at-home reading program with your child. Please fill out the following questionnaire so that this program can be evaluated and adjustments or changes can be made for its use next year. Please circle your answers. The comment section is optional and you can fill out as many or as few as you like.

1. ENJOYMENT OF PROGRAM

Did both you and your child enjoy the Whole Language reading program?

Yes No Somewhat

Optional Comment:

_____
_____
_____

2. SELECTION OF BOOKS

Did you feel that the selection of books was suitable for this program?

Yes No Somewhat

Optional Comment:

_____
_____
_____

3. TIME FACTOR

Did you feel that the program took too much/too little time for you and your child to complete on a weekly basis?

Too much time Just about right Could be longer

Optional comment:

_____
_____
_____

4. PROGRAM FAVORITES

Which part of the program did you/your child like the best?

_____ Reading the books together

_____ Discussing the books together

_____ Doing the "mystery" book search questions

_____ Drawing and writing responses for the folder

_____ Reading the responses of the other students

_____ All of it!!!

Optional Comment:

_____

_____

_____

Appendix E

Parent Whole Language Handbook

Appendix E
Parent Whole Language Handbook

USING WHOLE LANGUAGE IN KINDERGARTEN
A PARENT EXPLANATION OF NEW CURRICULUM

by Mrs. Sandra N. Floyd

WHAT IS WHOLE LANGUAGE?

The WHOLE LANGUAGE approach to reading instruction is a set of beliefs about how children learn language - oral language and written language. It is a Philosophy rather than a set of activities or materials. The name WHOLE LANGUAGE comes from the idea that we should keep language learning whole and meaningful - rather than building language from letters and sounds.

Research has shown us that "Children naturally acquire oral language by listening and talking. During these developing years perfection is not expected; children are free to make mistakes and approximations. Adults are understanding and accepting because they realize that learning to talk takes time and practice." (Eisele, 1991) Reading and writing are also learned through active, everyday use.

In the WHOLE LANGUAGE approach, children explore and experiment with words, link reading to real situations, and use language to learn about their world through unit work. The children come to understand that print is supposed to make sense. The goal of the WHOLE LANGUAGE program is to help children become avid readers and to love to read. The more they read, the better they read, and the more they like to read.

In our classroom, I would like to teach your children the JOY OF READING before they have to do the work of reading. Too often, I have seen children lose their initial enthusiasm for learning to read because they were "not allowed" to start reading until they learned all their letters and their sounds.

WHOLE LANGUAGE APPROACH	TRADITIONAL APPROACH
books	letters
stories	sounds
paragraphs	words
sentences	sentences
words	paragraphs
sounds	stories
letters	books

EXPLANATION: The WHOLE LANGUAGE approach begins with books, with meaning, while at the same time working towards identification of words, sounds, and letters. The TRADITIONAL approach to reading begins at teaching individual letters, then sounds, and eventually working towards reading of simple sentences and then stories and books. (Graves and Senecal, 1989)

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MY CLASSROOM WHOLE LANGUAGE GOALS

1. To instill a life-long love of books in my students.
2. To give the children "ownership" in books through book making
3. To encourage at-home reading of books with parents
4. To provide a print-rich environment
5. To foster print awareness - the conventions of written language
6. To teach basic sight words for beginning reading instruction (color words, number words, name words, 10-15 most commonly used Dolch words, the 18 Level 3 MacMillan words, a multitude of unit related words)
7. To encourage oral language development through retelling of stories, creative dramas, unit work and art activities
8. To have fun while learning!!!!

"Comments & Quotes from Students and Parents"

"I L O V E to read!"

"Storytime is my favorite time of the day."

"If I finish my work, can I read your book."

"Will you read my book first?"

"Can I play with your words?"

"Will you read that story again?" - after the 25th time!

"Be careful with Mrs. Floyd's book - its valuable."

"At dinner last night, our daughter told us the complete story of the Three Little Pigs using her puppets with all the details - and then she retold the whole story using version 2. It took 30 minutes!" Parent comment

"My son is so excited when he comes home with a book he has made. We read it together again and again." - Parent Comment

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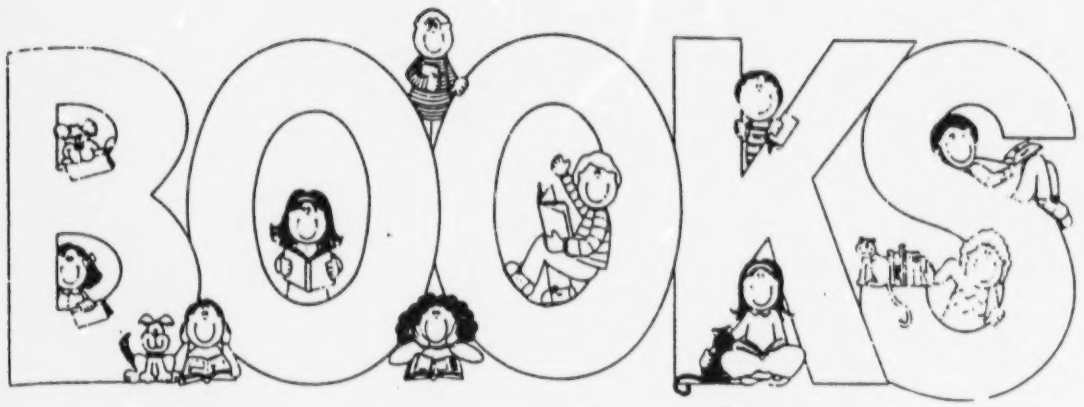

GOAL 1 - TO INSTILL A LIFE-LONG LOVE OF BOOKS

1. BOOKS - BOOKS - BOOKS!
Provide as many books as possible in the classroom setting.
WIDE VARIETY - Story books, cloth books, teacher-made books, student-made books, NON-FICTION books, instruction books, recipe books with pictures, library books, books with photos of field trips and class activities. Also, the children are encouraged to bring in their own books from home.

2. EXTENDED BOOK READING/STORY TELLING TIME - (45-60 min. per day)
- 30 minute Story time (at least) everyday - to emphasis the importance of books, this is the last thing to be cut during our almost daily rescheduling of plans due to unexpected events. "Let's not do this paper today so we can have our full story time." "I guess nap time will have to be shorter today so we can read all our books."
- 15 minutes of Silent Reading at the beginning of each school day.
10 minute book reading/story telling during morning Circle instructional time to teach concepts, introduce units, motivate, etc.
Children encouraged to read books if they finish early - This is the activity of choice for many children in my room.

3. TEACHER MODELING - I FEEL THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT!
- Teacher attitude and statements reflect love of books and JOY of book reading. "Oh good, we have an extra 10 minutes now so we can read this book!" "I love reading books." "That's one of my favorite books about dinosaurs."
- Teach proper care of books so that children will respect and care for books.

4. BOOK OF THE WEEK
- Choose one book per week that is to be read each day.
- During repeated readings, give children an active part to say or do during the book (Choral reading/actions/rhyming words)
- Leave this book out for silent reading and free reading for at least 2 months. Since this is a cumulative activity, after about 2 months the children will be very familiar with 10-12 books that they can "read"/remember.

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GOAL 2 - TO GIVE CHILDREN "OWNERSHIP" IN BOOKS THROUGH BOOK-MAKING

* * MAKE AS MANY BOOKS AS YOU CAN FOR THE CHILDREN TO TAKE HOME * *

1. INDIVIDUAL BOOKS - (one made per student)
   EXAMPLES OF TYPES OF BOOKS THAT WE WILL MAKE
   - Color Word book - Our beginning of the year "keepsake" book about the eight colors
   - Number word book - a Winter book to teach the number words, one through ten
   - Science/Unit theme booklets. Some Kindergarten science units lend themselves more easily to making small 4-8 page booklets for each child. They can then take home a lot of related papers in a booklet form rather that one page a day for a week. Some booklets that I have tried in the past are: Health and Food Group booklets, All about Me booklets, Dinosaur booklets, Plant booklets, Animal booklets, Universe booklets.
   - Seasonal Books such as "Black Cat, Black Cat, What Do You See"

2. ONE BIG CLASS BOOK - OR LITTLE BOOK
   - Make a class BIG BOOK about the unit of the week
   - Make books from pictures that are taken one field trips. Label.
   - Take individual photos of all the children and add their names.
   - Save one spectacular art project and turn into a book complete with sentences.
   - Provide a sentence starter and let the children draw the ending. Have the children dictate the answers to finish the book.

3. MAKE 5 - 6 SIMILAR BOOKS TO BE TAKEN HOME AND RETURNED
   - Distribute one or two pages of booklet to each child for them to complete/color. An example of this is the CIRCUS Book.
   - Assemble 5 -6 complete booklets
   - Set up a schedule for children to take home and return

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GOAL 3 - ENCOURAGE AT-HOME READING OF BOOKS WITH PARENTS

1. Encourage reading parents to read books made in school with their children. Often several days before we send them home we practice reading with a partner to increase our self-confidence - and they help each other remember words and details. Then when they go home, the children can "show-off" for their parents.

2. During frequent parent letters, suggest ways to help parents use work and/or booklets sent home to reinforce concepts and words that we are learning. Also encourage parents to save booklets to be reread later in the year.

3. Book orders - an easy way to encourage book reading at home.

4. Lend out class books for short periods of time for parents to read with their children.

5. Encourage children to get a library card of their own. Some parents are not aware that Kindergarten children can get their own library cards.

6. Parent classroom helpers - read books with individual children or small groups.

7. BOOK BAGS PROGRAM - Much more information on this later!

GOAL 4 - PROVIDING A PRINT-RICH ENVIRONMENT

1. LABELS - SIGNS - POSTERS - WORDS - WORDS - WORDS (EVERYWHERE)
   - List of words for letter of the week
   - Labels on everything
   - Sentence strips for flannelboard stories, nursery rhymes, poems
   - Using direction words for assignments
   - Fill the classroom with as many meaningful words as possible

GOAL 5 - TO FOSTER PRINT AWARENESS
(THE CONVENTIONS OF WRITTEN LANGUAGE)

The following CONCEPTS about print awareness are informally taught:

1. IF I CAN SAY IT, I CAN WRITE IT. IF I CAN WRITE IT, I CAN READ IT.

2. Print (words, sentences, stories, etc) is "talk written down".

3. Words contain letters - each letter has its own individual shape.

4. Spaces between the letters show where one word stops and another word starts.

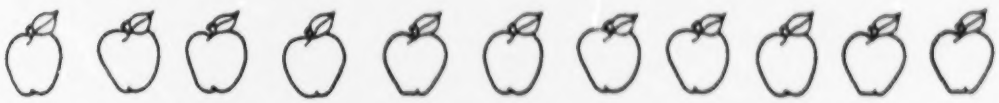
5. This is the direction that we read books. Front to back; left to right; top to bottom.

6. Sentences start with a capital letter - and end with a period.

7. Spelling is saying the letters in the word.

8. Informal beginning phonics - Letters have sounds - and if I put the sounds together, I can say the word. This is a generalization - but also establish the set for diversity that sometimes a letter can make a different sound.

9. End of the year beginning phonics can include: rhyming words; different endings (boy-boys, see-sees, look-looked); compound words - 2 little words that make a bigger word; listening for syllables with clapping exercises.



EXAMPLES OF HOW PRINT AWARENESS CONCEPTS ARE TAUGHT

*** Make separate cards for each word and laminate for durability. Make duplicates of some words so they can used at the beginning of the sentence (The) or in the middle of a sentence (the).

*** 3-Dimensional Period - Make periods with a large pom-pom with a magnet on the back to use as emphasis when doing sentences on the board.

*** Make people sentences - 1. Pass out word cards to children. 2. Write an easy sentence on the board 3. Try to make the same sentence as the one on the board - each child holding up their own word. One child gets to hold the period by himself - he always comes last!

*** Whenever you read off the board, use your "Reading Finger" to point to the words as you read them. Let the children use the big pointer to be the "teacher" as they read off the board. This reinforces left-right progression.

*** Center activity - Leave the words and sample sentences at the center so the children can practice making their own sentences on the floor.

**** Center activity - Leave just the words in a center and have the children build their own sentences. This activity works best with 2 children in a group as a cooperative learning activity.

*** Spelling Game - Put up all the words on the board and spell them one at time - taking down each word as it is correctly guessed.

*** Little words - big words (Integrating Reading activity with a Math-counting activity)

1. Sort the words according to how many letters it has in it. The TWO pile could include: (to, it, on, no) The THREE pile could include:(the, and, boy, see)
2. Count how many words you have in each pile.

Harder version:

1. Make up a ditto paper with columns - the TWO letter column, the THREE letter column
2. After sorting words, write down your answers in each column

**** SENTENCE BUILDING - Start with a short two word sentence and continue to add known words to make bigger and bigger sentences.

EXAMPLE: Dogs see.
Two dogs see.
Two black dogs see.
Two big black dogs see.
Two big black dogs see t[illegible]ts.
Two big black dogs see the [illegible]ree cats.
Two big black dogs see the three white cats.
Two big black dogs see the three little white cats.

*** Graphing the letters in words (Math activity)

1. On a large strip of papers taped to the chalkboard, draw 26 lines to divide it into 26 letter spaces and label A - Z.
2. Pass out the words and have each child stand up if their word has an A in it (upper or lower case)
3. Make a tally mark for each letter you find
4. Count the number of tallies - and graph them on a class graph.
5. The vowels will have the most tallies - a fact the children will visually see. Informal introduction to vowels and consonants.
6. This game is time-consuming but is very effective once!

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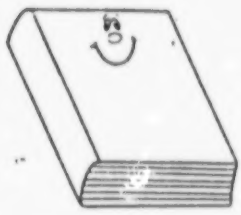
GOAL 6 - TO TEACH BASIC SIGHT WORDS

* COLOR WORDS * NUMBER WORDS * NAME WORDS.
* 18 LEVEL 3 MACMILLAN WORDS,
* 10-15 MOST COMMONLY USED DOLCH WORDS
* UNIT RELATED WORDS (DINOSAUR NAMES, ETC.)



GOAL 7 - TO ENCOURAGE ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH RETELLING STORIES, CREATIVE DRAMAS, AND ART ACTIVITIES

After we read a book, sometimes we act it out, retell it in our own words, or do a related art activity that goes home with the student as a memory aid so he/she can retell the story to their parent. Most of the stories that I use fall roughly into 3 main categories:

1. Traditional stories, fairy tales, and nursery rhymes - many of the children come into the room not knowing the "old favorites" that we grew up with. These stories or rhymes have appealed to children for many years and are also a part of our common heritage.

2. Modern popular stories - (One that can be bought at book stores) Books such as: Brown Bear, Brown Bear; Berstein Bear Books; Dr. Suess books; A Very, Hungry, Caterpillar; Chicka Chicka Boom Boom.

3. Predictable text stories - These are books that are not as popular at the book stores, but lend themselves to repetitive readings and are quickly memorized by the children. Books such as: If You Give a Mouse a Cookie; There's a Dragon in my Wagon; Mrs. Wishy-Washy; etc.

GOAL 8 - TO HAVE FUN WHILE LEARNING!!!! - A PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY

THIS IS MY GOAL - FOR THE CHILDREN AND FOR ME! I BELIEVE THAT IF IT IS FUN FOR ME - THEN IT IS FUN FOR MY CHILDREN! WE SPEND 6 HOURS A DAY AT SCHOOL - AND IF I LOOK FORWARD TO COMING EACH DAY BECAUSE IT IS EXCITING, THEN MY CHILDREN WILL CATCH THE SPIRIT AND THE JOY OF LEARNING.

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Reference List for
Parent Whole Language Handbook

Eisele, Beverly. Managing the Whole Language Classroom, Cypress, California: Creative Teaching Press, Inc., 1991.

Graves, Marilyn and Jan Senecal. "Let's Celebrate Whole Language (A Practical Guide for Parents)." ERIC Document: Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English (79th, Baltimore, MD, Nova 17-22, 1989.)

Appendix F

Book List

Appendix F
Book List

Bemelmans, Ludwig. Madeline. The Viking Press, 1939.

Berenstain, Stan & Jan. The Berenstain Bears - Ready, Get Set Go!. Random House, Inc. 1988.

Buller, Jon and Susan Schade. I Love You, Good Night. Simon & Schuster Inc. 1988.

Burton, Virginia Lee. Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel. Houghton Mifflin Company. 1967.

Conrad, Pam. The Tub People. Scholastic Inc. 1989.

Damon, Laura. Birthday Buddies. Troll Associates, 1988.

De Brunhoff, Jean. The Story of Babar. Macmillan Book Clubs, Inc. 1933.

Eastman, P. D. Are You My Mother?. Random House, Inc. 1960.

Eastman, P. D. The Best Nest. Random House, Inc. 1968.

Freeman, Don. Corduroy. Viking Press. 1968.

Flack, Marjorie and Kurt Wiese. The Story About Ping. Macmillan Book Clubs, Inc. 1933.

Giff, Patricia Reilly. Today Was a Terrible Day. Penguin Books Ltd. 1980.

Grey, Judith. Mud Pies. Troll Associates, 1981.

Hoban, Russell. Bedtime For Frances. Harper & Row, Publishers, 1960.

Hoberman, Mary Ann. A House Is a House for Me. The Viking Press, 1978.

Johnson, Crockett. Harold and the Purple Crayon. Scholastic Inc. 1959.

Martin, Bill and John Archambault. Chicka Chicka Boom Boom. Scholastic Inc. 1989.

Pinkwater, Daniel Manus. The Big Orange Splot. Scholastic Inc. 1977.

Provensen, Alice and Martin. The Year at Maple Hill Farm. Macmillan Book Clubs, Inc. 1978.

Rey, H. A. Curious George Rides a Bike. Houghton Mifflin Company, 1952.

Sadler, Marilyn. It's Not Easy Being a Bunny. Random House, Inc. 1983.

Seuss, Dr. Hop on Pop. Random House, Inc. 1963.

Seuss, Dr. Mr. Brown Can Moo! Can You?. Random House, Inc. 1970.

Seuss, Dr. One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish. Random House, Inc. 1960.

Seuss, Dr. Oh Say Can You Say?. Random House, Inc. 1979.

Slobodkina, Esphyr. Caps For Sale. Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. 1940.

Stouffer, Marty. Wild Animal Babies. Western Pubishing Company, Inc. 1990.

Wallner, John. City Mouse - Country Mouse. Scholastic, Inc. 1970.

Williams, Margery. The Velveteen Rabbit. Platt & Munk Publishers, 1987.

Zion, Gene. No Roses for Harry!. Macmillan Book Clubs, Inc. 1958.

Appendix G

Whole Language Direction Sheet

Appendix G
Whole Language Direction Sheet

Title of Book : _____

Author of Book:_____

Whole Language Directions for using this book.

1. Read this book at least 2 times please.
First time - for enjoyment and to get the meaning of the story
Second time - to look for specific things (answers for questions, pictures, ideas for drawing, etc.)

2. Oral Language Discussion - 1 or 2 questions

3. "Mystery" Book Search Question - Can you find . . . ?

4. Written (Drawing) Assignment - Parent may add a written explanation of the picture at bottom of picture. This can be a sentence that your child dictates to you - or you can repeat the question sentence and fill in the missing answer. Parents - please print fairly large for easy reading. Then put this picture in the folder for others to see and enjoy.
1. Draw -

5. Read and enjoy the other responses! One of my favorite parts!

6. Parents - please remember to fill out and return the Parent Response Form on this book. Thank you for your help.

Appendix H

Results of
Kindergarten Parent Survey on Whole Language

Appendix H

RESULTS OF KINDERGARTEN PARENT SURVEY ON WHOLE LANGUAGE

1. I believe that reading at home with my child is important.

	Pretest	Post Test
1 - Not at all important	0	0
2 - Slightly important	0	0
3 - Moderately important	4	0
4 - Very important	96	100

2. My child likes/loves to be read to at home.

	Pretest	Post Test
1 - Not at all, not interested	0	0
2 - Slightly interested	0	0
3 - Moderately interested	16	4
4 - Very interested	84	96

3. I am familiar with Whole Language Techniques (WLT) in reading instruction.

	Pretest	Post Test
1 - No knowledge of WLT	66	4
2 - Very little knowledge of WLT	14	11
3 - Moderate amount of kn of WLT	20	41
4 - A great deal of knowledge of WLT	0	44

4. I feel (or would feel after Whole Language orientation session) comfortable using Whole Language techniques at home during parent/child reading time.

	Pretest	Post Test
1 - Not at all comfortable	4	0
2 - Slightly comfortable	33	0
3 - Moderately comfortable	59	19
4 - Very comfortable	4	81

5. I feel able to critically judge the quality and suitability for instruction of a children's literature book.

	Pretest	Post Test
1 - Not at all qualified	15	0
2 - Slightly qualified	18	7
3 - Moderately qualified	37	63
4 - Well qualified	30	30

Appendix I

Results of
Attitudinal Survey on Whole Language Reading Program

Appendix I
RESULTS OF ATTITUDINAL SURVEY ON WHOLE LANGUAGE
READING PROGRAM

1. ENJOYMENT OF PROGRAM

Did both you and your child enjoy the Whole Language reading program?

Yes	100
No	0
Somewhat	0

2. SELECTION OF BOOKS

Did you feel that the selection of books was suitable for this program?

Yes	63
No	0
Somewhat	37

3. TIME FACTOR

Did you feel that the program took too much/too little time for you and your child to complete on a weekly basis?

Too much time	0
Just about right	89
Could be longer	11

4. PROGRAM FAVORITES

Which part of the program did you/your child like the best?
(Some people answered more than once)

Reading the books together	22
Discussing the books together	7
Doing the "mystery" book search questions	19
Drawing and writing responses for the folder	19
Reading the responses of the other students	11
All of it!!!	67